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Housekeepers' Chat

Friday, Feb. 17.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Betty Lou Cooks and Serves a Dinner." Information from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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Last week I told you about Betty Lou's first dinner -- the meal she prepared all by herself, when she was twelve years old. Since then she has planned and cooked a good many meals. When I asked her to describe one of the best, so that I might broadcast the details, she invited me to her home for dinner.

Would you like to write her menu? It is quite ambitious, for a youngster. This is what Betty Lou served, and she planned the meal herself: Roast Pork Loin; Scalloped Sweet Potatoes and Apples; Buttered Cabbage; and Grapefruit.

As I told Betty Lou, that sounds like a very grown-up meal, for a young girl to plan and prepare.

"Oh, pshaw," said Betty Lou, "that meal was easy! I always choose dishes that won't have to be watched every minute of the time. Cooking isn't hard, if you don't have to rush around too much at the last minute. And Roast Pork Loin is as easy as abc. Want me to tell you how I did it, Aunt Sammy?"

"Surely," I said. "Tell me just how you cooked your meal, Betty Lou, and I'll take notes on it."

"First," began Betty Lou, smoothing her checked gingham apron, with an important air, "mother bought me a pork loin, which weighed about four pounds. All it needed was to be wiped off, rubbed with salt and flour, and laid in a roasting pan. Then I put it in a hot oven. You don't have to baste pork loin, because there's a layer of fat on it which bastes the meat as it cooks. I didn't add water, either. After the pork loin was well seared, in the very hot oven, I lowered the heat, and let the meat finish roasting in a very moderate oven.. You know, Aunt Sammy, pork has to be cooked till it is thoroughly done. I roasted my four-pound pork loin for two hours.

"When the roast was done, I put it on a big, hot platter, ready for carving. Then I skimmed part of the fat from the meat drippings in the roasting pan, stirred some flour into the drippings, let the flour brown a little, and added water. Did you think my brown gravy was good, Aunt Sammy?"

"Wonderful," I told Betty Lou. "Just as smooth as any brown gravy I've ever seen. Now tell me how you prepared the Scalloped Sweet Potatoes and Apples."

"I followed the recipe in your cookbook, Aunt Sammy. It is an easy recipe. I used 3 medium-sized sweet potatoes, 4 medium-sized apples, 1/2 cup of sugar, and 3 tablespoons of butter. I washed the sweet potatoes, and cooked them in their skins, in boiling water. Then I cooled them, and skinned them. I cut the potatoes and apples into slices, placed them in alternate layers, in a buttered baking dish, and sprinkled sugar over each layer. Then I added a little water, and baked the sweet potatoes and apples until they were done, and brown on top. The scalloped sweet potatoes and apples were cooked in the oven at the same time with the roast pork. They were all ready for the table, when I took them out, because I cooked them in the earthenware baking dish Mother got me for Christmas. Now do you want to know how I cooked the cabbage, Aunt Sammy?"

"Go right on," I said. "Tell me how you cooked the cabbage, and prepared the grapefruit."

"The cabbage was easy to prepare. When Mother bought the groceries, she got a good crisp head of cabbage. All I had to do was to slice the cabbage, and cook it in boiling water, which had a little bit of salt in it. In about 20 minutes, the cabbage was done. It was tender, and a pretty green color, and it had a sweet flavor. I poured off the extra water, (there wasn't much) and added more salt, and a lot of melted butter. I like lots of butter on cabbage. Everybody in our family does, and they all like buttered cabbage, too, cooked only about 20 minutes.

"Now I'll tell you how to fix grapefruit. First, you cut it in two. Then you have to take out the pithy center. If you cut it carefully, you can lift it right out, with a spoon. I like grapefruit served plain," said Betty Lou, "especially at this time of the year, when it's so fresh and juicy, but I wanted to make my dessert extra nice, since you were company. When I was looking around, in Mother's pantry, I found she had some left-over canned fruit, and some preserves. So I mixed them together and put a spoonful in the center of each grapefruit. Did you like it, Aunt Sammy?"

I hastened to assure Betty Lou that I liked every part of her dinner, and that the grapefruit was particularly delightful. As a matter of fact, Betty Lou has no idea how proud I am of her cooking accomplishments. You see, her mother was too busy to pay any attention to the child, until last year, when she suddenly realized how much interested Betty Lou is, in cooking and serving meals.

Let's repeat Betty Lou's menu now, answer a few questions, and say goodbye until Monday. The menu, again: Roast Pork Loin; Scalloped Sweet Potatoes and Apples; Buttered Cabbage, and Grapefruit.

Next, the questions. Number One: "What is paprika?" P-a-p-r-i-k-a. Paprika is a mild, sweet variety of red pepper. Its scientific name is Capsicum annuum. So, if at any time I suggest that you sprinkle a little Capsicum annuum on your salad, you will know what I mean.

R-H.C. 2/17/28

Second question: "What is cinnamon?" Cinnamon is the dried bark of a shrub or tree grown in India and Ceylon.

Third question: "What are nutmegs?" The nutmeg is the kernel of the fruit of the nutmeg tree. The fruit is about three inches long, and looks something like the outer part of the American walnut. The nutmeg itself is enclosed in a thin, hard, brittle shell, of no value. But the covering of this shell is valuable, for it makes the seasoning known as mace.

The fourth question is from a listener who asks how to cook red cabbage. Red cabbage can be cut up in small pieces and cooked in lightly salted water, just as green cabbage is cooked. Season it with butter. The cooking does make the red cabbage turn a rather dark purple, but the attractive red color will return, if you put a little vinegar on the cabbage. Red cabbage may also be used in slaw, or in salads or pickle. Pickle can be made very easily, by seasoning the raw chopped cabbage with spiced vinegar.

The last question amuses me, although I realize it is a very serious one. Wait, I'll read the letter: "Dear Aunt Sammy: Please sent me the Radio Cookbook. I did not get the method for mixing Apricot Pudding the day you broadcast it. Lost out completely, when I sneezed!" Now, wasn't that perfectly dreadful? I'm going to broadcast the Steamed Apricot Pudding again, for the sake of the poor listener who sneezed at the wrong time.

Nine ingredients, for Steamed Apricot Pudding, which is a delicious dessert:

1/2 pound dried apricots	1/4 cup sugar
1 cup water	2 eggs
1 cup flour	2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 cup butter	1/2 teaspoon salt, and
1 or 2 tablespoons apricot juice, if needed.	

Please check the nine ingredients, for Steamed Apricot Pudding: (Repeat)

Soak the apricots overnight in the water. Drain, and cut them into small pieces with scissors. Cream the butter and the sugar, add the beaten eggs, and the flour in which the salt and baking powder have been sifted. Stir in the apricots. If the batter is a little stiff, add one or two tablespoons of the liquid in which the apricots were soaked. Partially fill a greased mold, and steam for two hours. Serve hot, with liquid or hard sauce.

That's all of the recipe. I hope no one was so unfortunate as to sneeze, while I broadcast it.

Now I'm going to call on my friend, W. R. B., the Garden Specialist, and see what information I can get from him, for Monday's program.

